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Inside Information

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INSIDE THIS "INSIDE" Page

USDA study group formed to review electronic dissemination of information.....	1
Southern agricultural research communicators' officers named for 1982.....	1
University of Georgia has opening for extension television editor.....	2
University of Illinois has entry level teaching position open.....	2
Another USDA economic report to be issued on paid subscription basis.....	2
May 1 is deadline for annual Blue Pencil and Gold Screen contests.....	3
Nebraska computer information network to help USDA export drive.....	3
Secretary Block gets first educational package for informing young people.....	3
Atlanta, Ga., regional information office telephone number correction.....	3
News magazine says federal government may become government of fewer words.....	4
USDA market reports whisked along high speed circuits of USDA and AP.....	4
Nation's largest newspaper chain gets larger with latest acquisition.....	4

GROUP TO STUDY ELECTRONIC DISSEMINATION

A USDA group has been formed to study electronic dissemination of information and to make policy recommendations for the department.

The group is part of USDA's departmental information processing standards (DIPS) program review team which is reviewing a number of areas related to the Paperwork Reduction Act.

It will make recommendations to the Secretary's Information Resource Management Task Force by mid-August.

According to a memorandum from Deputy Assistant Secretary John Schrote to all agency administrators, the group will survey USDA agencies to (1) identify information currently being disseminated electronically, (2) identify requirements and needs that are not now being met by USDA, and (3) identify where joint efforts can replace duplicative efforts.

Once the survey is completed, a report will be made to the IRM Task Force along with "appropriate policy and procedural recommendations related to electronic sharing and dissemination of information by USDA."

Agency administrators were asked to name a representative to the study group "who is directly involved in dealing with the users and is familiar with your existing means of electronic dissemination.

"Experience with or working knowledge of existing electronic agricultural information systems to farmers or the agribusiness community would be helpful to the group," Schrote said in his memorandum.

SOUTHERN AG RESEARCH COMMUNICATORS NAMED

New officers were recently named for the Agricultural Communications Section of the Southern Association of Agricultural Scientists.

They are: Chairman, Paul Donavan, Oklahoma State University; vice chairman, Bonnie Riechert, University of Georgia; and secretary-treasurer, Bill Reed, University of Tennessee.

GEORGIA HAS OPENING FOR TV EDITOR

The University of Georgia has an opening for a extension television editor beginning June 1.

The incumbent will coordinate production of television public service covering a wide range of topics and appealing to consumers and persons engaged in agriculture.

The person also works with other department members in producing news and feature stories for use on commercial television stations; produces and coordinates special programs for use on commercial and educational television; and assists with the general communications program of the Georgia Extension Service.

A Master's degree in journalism is required, with emphasis on television production preferred. Also preferred is at least 5 years experience in writing and producing material for use on television.

Applicants must demonstrate ability to relate to and work with people in design of effective educational programs using television and films as communications methods. Skill in operating television equipment also is required.

Deadline for applications and transcripts is May 5.

Send to James B. Harris, Head, Personnel & Staff Development Department, University of Georgia, Lumpkin House, Athens, GA 30602, or call (404) 542-2713.

TEACHING POSITION OFFERED AT ILLINOIS

An entry level teaching position is open in the agricultural communications department at the University of Illinois.

Duties include planning and carrying out an academic program in agricultural communications; providing instructions; developing and testing instructional concepts, methods and materials for improving teaching effectiveness; and doing research which can add to the body of knowledge about communicating, especially as related to agriculture.

A Master's degree is preferred; a Bachelor's degree in communications is required. Also required are strong skills in communications planning, writing, broadcasting, photography or related activities.

The position also requires experience or education involving agriculture and an active interest in teaching and learning.

Beginning date for the 9-month annual appointment is August 21. Deadline for applications is April 30.

Send to James F. Evans, Agricultural Communications, 58 Mumford Hall, University of Illinois, 1301 W. Gregory Drive, Urbana, IL 61801, or call (217) 333-4785.

ANOTHER USDA REPORT ON FEE BASIS

Beginning in June, the "World Agricultural Supply and Demand Estimates," published by USDA's World Agricultural Outlook Board, will be available only on a paid subscription basis.

The subscription fee will be \$30, domestic, and \$37.50, foreign. Single copies may be purchased for \$2 domestic and \$2.50 foreign from the Superintendent of Documents.

The move reflects current USDA budget constraints and another effort by a USDA agency to recover publication costs.

A limited number of issues will be provided at no cost to land grant university libraries and to the news media.

REMINDER: MAY 1 DEADLINE FOR CONTESTS

May 1 is the deadline for the 1982 entries in the annual Blue Pencil and Gold Screen contests sponsored by the National Association of Government Communicators.

The annual competition is designed to recognize outstanding print and audiovisual materials from federal, state and local government communicators.

The Blue Pencil contest, now in its 20th year, is open to writers, editors, designers, information specialists, printing officers and other communicators.

The Blue Pencil awards will cover 15 categories, including various kinds of publications, periodicals, books, newsletters, news releases, feature articles, speeches, and visual design (graphics and photography).

The Gold Screen competition has 5 general categories: Education, information, training, internal communications and public service.

Under each of the general categories, programs may be entered under any one of 6 different formats: 16mm film/videotape; slide-audio and filmstrip presentations; multiscreen presentations; audio only (tape, cassette or disk); photographs produced as part of a completed audiovisual program; and graphics produced as part of a completed audiovisual program.

Entree fee for NAGC members, for either contest, is \$10, and for non-NAGC members, \$25. For further information, contact Linda Ruseti, P.O. Box 7127, Alexandria, VA 22307, or call (703) 768-4546 between the hours of 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. weekdays.

COMPUTER INFORMATION TO HELP EXPORT DRIVE

A joint pilot computer project of USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service and the University of Nebraska could lend extra punch to U.S. agricultural export expansion efforts, particularly for value-added products.

The pilot project will allow the Foreign Agricultural Service to provide foreign agricultural trade leads to U.S. suppliers via the University of Nebraska's computer network, called AGNET.

The system permits same day response by U.S. companies to requests for agricultural products made by foreign importers to U.S. agricultural attaches and counselors throughout the world.

SECRETARY BLOCK GETS FIRST PACKAGE YOUTH

The first copy of an educational package designed to inform young people about the critical links between food and energy supplies for the future was presented to Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block recently.

The Secretary commended the National Food & Energy Council on its efforts to raise the public's awareness of the necessity of adequate electrical power as farming continues to grow more energy-intensive.

More information on the educational material is available from the National Food & Energy Council, 409 Vandiver West, Suite 202, Columbia, MO 65202.

CORRECTION OF SOUTHERN TELEPHONE NUMBER

In an item in the March 29 issue of INSIDE INFORMATION, "Two Regional Information Offices Close," the telephone number for the Southeast Regional Information Office at Atlanta, Georgia, was listed as (404) 257-4154. The correct commercial number is (404) 881-4154. FTS number is 8-257-4154.

GOVERNMENT OF FEWER WORDS?

U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT magazine, in April 5 issue, said a year-long program by the federal government on "tightening the spigot of the flood of words pouring out of Washington" has resulted in scrapping more than 1,000 publications at an estimated savings of \$35 million.

The article quotes a spokesperson from the Office of Management & Budget who predicts that by the end of 1982, savings will total at least \$100 million.

OMB puts the cost of U.S. publications in 1982 at \$302 million, but private estimates of the yearly federal printing bill for publications, reports and press releases range up to \$2 billion, the article said.

"The Agriculture Department alone publishes 8,000 titles, of which more than 2,500 are expected to be abolished," the article continued.

"The administration has yet to get a handle on the thousands of information specialists--called "flacks" by their critics--who make up Washington's public relations army.

"Some estimates put their number at 20,000, but identities and activities of many are so disguised by vague titles that no accurate count is possible."

MARKET REPORTS "PIGGY-BACK" ON AP CIRCUITS

The Associate Press has computerized the collection of USDA farm market reports handled formerly by regional AP bureaus and distributed on newspaper and broadcast wires.

According to AP LOG, the wire service's newsletter, 156 reports are being filtered from USDA's nationwide highspeed circuit, administered by the Agricultural Marketing Service, into a computer at AP's New York headquarters.

The selected copy is then whisked along an internal AP highspeed network to regional computers in bureaus that use the market reports.

As a result, many timely farm market reports are reaching regional bureaus sooner and consequently reaching newspapers and broadcasting station newsrooms earlier, according to the newsletter story.

Previously, the market information was fed to AP regional bureaus in ways that took both time and staff time. These included phone dictation with local USDA market reporting offices and hand delivery of market information to bureaus by USDA, requiring rekeyboarding of the reports.

Now, AP bureaus receive the markets directly into their computers and are notified on an indexing abstract printer as soon as a report arrives on the New York link, enabling bureaus to process the items quickly and efficiently.

NATION'S LARGEST NEWS CHAIN GETS LARGER

Gannet Company, Inc., owner of the nation's largest newspaper group, has announced plans to acquire 11 newspapers in central and southern Mississippi.

The acquisitions would give Gannett 8 daily and 32 nondaily newspapers.

The purchases include the morning Jackson CLARION-LEDGER, afternoon Jackson DAILY NEWS and the afternoon Hattiesburg AMERICAN, with a combined daily circulation of 132,000 and a combined Sunday circulation of 145,000.

INSIDE INFORMATION is published for distribution to public affairs and information staff members of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, its agencies, State Departments of Agriculture and Land Grant Universities. Any items, comments and inquiries should be addressed to Stan W. Prochaska, Assistant Public Affairs Director, Room 407-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250, to AGR002 on the Dialcom INTERCOMM system, or call (202) 447-7454.